

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

AMEMBASSY CARACAS

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LIMDIS - USCINCSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CU, GY

SUBJECT: CASTRO AND BURNHAM TO TRAVEL TOGETHER TO NON-
ALIGNED CONFERENCE

REFERENCE: (A) GEORGETOWN 1203: (B) GEORGETOWN 1261

FOR CHARGE

1. REFTELS REPORTED PLANNED SEPTEMBER 3-4 VISIT TO GUYANA
BY FIDEL CASTRO AND PRIME MINISTER BURNHAM'S APPARENT
INTENTION TO TRAVEL WITH CASTRO TO ALGIERS NON-ALIGNED
CONFERENCE ON CASTRO'S RUSSIAN-BUILT JET. AT THIS JUNC-
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TURE, ANY ATTEMPT ON OUR PART TO CONVINCE BURNHAM TO CANCEL

CASTRO VISIT WOULD PROBABLY BE UNSUCCESSFUL.
PRODUCTIVE. HOWEVER, SINCE BURNHAM'S TRAVEL PLANS ARE
STILL BEING HELD CLOSELY, THERE MAY BE A CHANCE TO DISSUADE
HIM FROM ACCOMPANYING CASTRO TO ALGIERS.

2. YOU SHOULD THEREFORE SEEK AN EARLY OPPORTUNITY TO MEET WITH RAMPHAL AND RAISE THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

(A). WE WISH TO REMIND THE GOG THAT PUBLIC AND CONGRESSIONAL ATTITUDES IN THE US TOWARD SUCH A HIGHLY "SYMBOLIC" GESTURE AS ACCCOMPANYING FIDEL CASTRO TO THE NON-ALIGNED CONFERENCE ARE UNPREDICTABLE AT BEST. WE WONDER IF THE GOG HAS ADEQUATELY CONSIDERED THIS, ESPECIALLY IN LIGHT OF UPCOMING CONGRESSIONAL ACTIONS OF INTEREST TO GUYANA (E.G., SUGAR ACT).

(B). OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS, WE HAVE NOTED PRIME MINISTER BURNHAM'S SUCCESS IN ESTABLISHING A POSITION OF INDEPENDENT LEADERSHIP FOR HIMSELF AND FOR GUYANA IN THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT AND IN OTHER INTERNATIONAL GATHERINGS. BECAUSE OF THIS, WE ARE UNDERSTANDABLY PUZZLED AT HIS APPARENT DECISION TO TIE HIMSELF AND THE GOG TO CASTRO'S FORTUNES WHICH WE FEEL WILL DIMINISH CONSIDERABLY BURNHAM'S OWN INTERNATIONAL PRESTIGE BY GIVING THE APPEARANCE THAT HE IS MERELY PART OF CASTRO'S PRO-SOVIET ENTOURAGE.

(C). IT OCCURS TO US, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT BURNHAM'S ARRIVAL STATEMENT AT ALGIERS WILL BE GREATLY OVERSHADOWED BY CASTRO'S AND THAT GUYANA'S INDEPENDENCE OF ACTION MAY BE THUS COMPROMISED BY SUCH UNUSUALLY CLOSE IDENTIFICATION WITH THE CUBAN PRIME MINISTER. IS THIS A DELIBERATE GOG

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POLICY?

3. BEGIN FYI. WE RECOGNIZE THAT RAMPHAL MAY REJECT THESE ARGUMENTS, SAYING AMONG OTHER THINGS THAT THERE IS NO INTENT TO MODIFY GUYANA'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE US: THAT THIS WARM DISPLAY OF FRIENDSHIP FOR CUBA IS SIMPLY EVIDENCE OF GUYANA'S POSTURE OF COMPLETE NON-ALIGNMENT: THAT THE US AND THE PRC MAINTAIN EMBASSIES AT GEORGETOWN AND HAVE

READY ACCESS TO BURNHAM BUT THAT THE SOVIETS HAVE NOT ENJOYED SUCH A RELATIONSHIP IN THE PAST; AND THAT BURNHAM HAS CAREFULLY WEIGHED THE EFFECTS OF TRAVELING WITH CASTRO VIS A VIS GUYANA'S INTERNATIONAL POSITION. NEVERTHELESS, THE DEPARTMENT BELIEVES IT WORTHWHILE TO INFORM THE GOG OF OUR CONCERN THAT WHAT MAY SEEM TO BE LOGICAL AND WELL-REASONED POLICIES WHEN VIEWED FROM THE VANTAGE POINT OF GEORGETOWN CAN EASILY BE INTERPRETED DIFFERENTLY ELSEWHERE AND THAT WE ARE DESIROUS OF PREVENTING ANY INADVERTENT

COMPLICATIONS IN OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH THE GOG.
END FYI.

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